



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## FACT SHEET

### **MAYOR SANDERS ANNOUNCES PLAN TO PURCHASE SECOND FIRE HELICOPTER**

#### ***BEGINNING IN AUGUST 2008, CITY WILL HAVE TWO HELICOPTERS FOR AROUND-THE-CLOCK FIRE-RESCUE SERVICE***

Mayor Jerry Sanders today announced a plan for the purchase of a second helicopter for the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department. To maximize availability, minimize response times and provide for the greatest mission flexibility, the second helicopter will be staffed around the clock with a pilot, crew chief, and firefighter paramedic as is currently done with Copter 1.

The availability of a second medium-lift helicopter will help ensure that residents of San Diego have access to immediate and continuous aerial fire suppression, rescue, and emergency medical services. The acquisition and staffing of a second fire-rescue helicopter is essential to ensuring the Fire-Rescue Department's ability to maintain at least one operational helicopter at all times and to provide additional aerial capability to respond to multiple, concurrent and large-scale emergency incidents.

If approval for this acquisition is received by January 2008, the completed helicopter is expected to be in service by August 2008, prior to the arrival of seasonal Santa Ana winds.

#### **FUNDING PLAN**

- If approved by the City Council, funding for this acquisition would be in the form of a 15-year lease-purchase agreement.
- The sales tax and lease purchase payments in Fiscal Years 2009 through 2011 would be paid from currently existing funds in the Fire-Rescue Department's helicopter special revenue account and from scheduled deposits that will be made to that fund from established corporate sponsorships and allocations from the Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE).
- Notwithstanding additional donations to the helicopter special revenue account, **payments from the General Fund for the lease-purchase would not begin until Fiscal Year 2012.**

### **HELICOPTER SPECIFICATIONS**

Manufacturer: Bell Textron Helicopter

Model: Bell 412EP medium-lift helicopter

Estimated Purchase Cost: \$8.5 million

Additional costs to install necessary technology: \$1.75 to \$2 million

Total cost of fully loaded helicopter: \$10.5 million

Fully financed cost of helicopter: \$15.9 million

### **STAFFING PLAN**

- Staffing for the second fire-rescue helicopter will be provided in the same manner as currently provided for Copter 1, assuring immediate 24-hour, seven-days-a-week availability.
- The staff will consist of a pilot, crew chief, and firefighter paramedic.
- Both Copter 1 and Copter 2 and their crews will be based at the Fire-Rescue Air Operations Facility at Montgomery Field in Kearny Mesa.

### **ADVANTAGES OF EXPANDING THE CITY'S FIRE-RESCUE FLEET**

- Increased probability that at least one helicopter will be available at all times
- Capacity to handle multiple, concurrent emergency missions
- Doubling of City-controlled aerial firefighting resources for large incidents
- Dividing operating hours between both aircraft, thereby increasing their service life
- Enhanced maintenance coverage under the manufacturer's extended warranty program
- Increased capability and safety via state-of-the-art technology and safety features
- Having single-owner maintenance documentation and aircraft history
- Creation of higher, original-owner resale value